

1992

Modern Chinese Defence Policy: Present Development's Future Directions

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Recommended Citation

Byrnes, Michael (1992) "Modern Chinese Defence Policy: Present Development's Future Directions," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 45 : No. 1 , Article 28.
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol45/iss1/28>

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He criticizes Sun Tzu for failing adequately to describe the "nature" of war (just or unjust), overemphasizing the importance of the military over the political leadership, and for being too rigid and mechanical in applying his principles. General Tao concludes that these faults ("backward or even reactionary views") were due to Sun Tzu's class status and the fact that his book was written in the interest of the emerging feudalistic class.

An appendix to General Tao's book provides a short and straightforward translation of Sun Tzu's *Art of War* essays; this is in vernacular English and is therefore easy to read. That in itself makes this book an excellent adjunct to, but not a replacement for, the Griffith text. As previously mentioned, the value of General Tao's book is not so much in his explanation of Sun Tzu's thought, but as an indication of how these thoughts are presented to modern Chinese military professionals.

E.D. SMITH, JR.
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Dellios, Rosita. *Modern Chinese Defence Policy: Present Developments, Future Directions*. New York: St. Martin's, 1990. 256pp. \$55

Rosita Dellios, professor of international relations at Bond University in Australia, contends that the ongoing Chinese defense modernization does not spell an end to the Maoist concept of "people's war." Dellios argues that the people's war strategy will continue

to find new effectiveness, that the changing face of Chinese defense strategy is only cosmetically Western: its strategic features remain distinctly Chinese. The author posits that people's war under modern conditions is no mere human-wave response to armed aggression, but rather the strategy for psychological preemption of such aggression. A concept called "guerilla nuclear warfare" underpins the Chinese strategic approach.

Dellios has written in a clear and direct style. Despite its worthwhile portions, however, the book suffers from a major flaw which is so serious as to negate its positive aspects.

The author has failed to take into account the continuous changes that have been taking place in the Chinese domestic environment and in the international arena. The strategic shift in defense planning initiated in 1985 by Deng Xiaoping has not been factored into this study.

The key elements of the shift include reliance on a smaller professionally structured military force with a focus southward instead of to the north, and involvement in limited local wars instead of large scale conflicts.

The subsequent events in the Soviet Union intensified these trends, and all but did away with the massive offensive threat that the Soviet forces had posed to the Chinese heartland. These events hastened the shift and ultimately led to a deemphasis on a Soviet-initiated large scale war involving nuclear weapons. This scenario was one in which China

would assume a defensive deep, luring-in strategy, both in its deterrent and war fighting components.

As the Soviet threat receded the Chinese were left with a doctrinal and force structure dilemma that sharpened as a result of potential conflict in areas other than along the Soviet border. In 1986-1987 there was tension with India over border issues, and worsening relations with a recalcitrant Vietnam eventually led to naval conflict in the Spratlys in March of 1988. By the late 1980s the Chinese strategists posited that the most likely form of conflict would be a local, limited war, and one had to search hard to find reference to people's war, except among the die-hard ideologues. Very little of this strategic shift is discussed in this book.

Although this work is well written and reads easily, this serious omission causes this reviewer to recommend that the interested reader wait for one more in tune with international and Chinese domestic reality.

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Babbage, Ross. *A Coast Too Long: Defending Australia Beyond the 1990s*. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1990. 231pp. \$18.95

Since the early 1970s, when the United States and Britain began withdrawing their ground forces from Southeast Asia, Australians have been confronted with the need to alter their country's defense policy to meet new

regional security challenges. Defense white papers have argued that the sole option left to Australia is to increase that country's defense self-reliance. Yet, until retired intelligence analyst Paul Dibb's seminal *Review of Australian Defence Capabilities* (1986), little attention had been directed toward reassessing the strategic concepts upon which this "greater self-reliance" was to be based.

This book, by Ross Babbage of the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre of the Australian National University, is an important contribution to the field. Babbage brings impressive expertise to his subject; his background includes the book *Rethinking Australia's Defence* (1980).

While Babbage gives considerable attention to local defense contingencies, his purpose is to offer a new strategic concept which will guide these national efforts if his recommendations were to be adopted.

The solution for Australia, according to Babbage, is to adopt a strategy of persuasion which "aims to resolve the issue quickly by attacking in political, economic, social, and military dimensions to undermine the willpower of the opponent's key decision makers." In essence, "deterrence" is to be achieved by "persuading an opponent's decision-making elite that operations against Australia are not worth the candle." He appreciates fully the key limitations which plagues Australian security planning: perennially inadequate financial resources and continuously poor central defense planning.